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ORIGIN WHA-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
	DS-00	EAP-00	EUR-00	VC-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	M-00	DCP-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OMB-00	NIMA-00	PC-01	GIWI-00	P-00	FMPC-00	SP-00
	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00	BEG-00	R-00	EPAE-00	ECA-00
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EUR/ERA: KALLEGRONE DRL: RJACKSON  
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TO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 168747

BRIDGETOWN PASS GRENADA AS ACTION

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/23/14  
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, KDEM, VE, KPAO  
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE ON VENEZUELAN PRESIDENTIAL REFERENDUM

CLASSIFIED BY WHA AA/S JAMES DERHAM FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)  
AND (D).

1. (U) This is an action request.
2. (SBU) Venezuela's August 15 recall referendum on the mandate of President Chavez will be a critical test of democracy in that country. The constitutionally-sanctioned referendum is a key component in the Venezuelan people's efforts to achieve a "constitutional, democratic, peaceful and electoral solution" to the ongoing political impasse as called for in OAS Resolution 833. The U.S. is working closely with the international community, led by the Organization of American States, to support a free and fair process. As the referendum draws near, the Department requests action addressees approach host governments and, as posts determine appropriate, leading non-governmental organizations (NGOs), journalists and editorial writers to urge public statements, op-ed pieces, and editorials in support of a free and fair referendum in Venezuela. Department requests that posts report host government reactions, as well as any local media reactions and slug WHA/AND and WHA/PDA. Demarche points for all host governments following in paragraph 3. On-the-record points for use with the media in paragraph 5. Additional points for "Friends" posts (Mexico, Santiago, Lisbon, Madrid and Brasilia) are in para 4.

Demarche to Host Governments and background points

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On-The-Record Media Points

5. (U) Below are on-the-record points for use with local media:

-- Venezuelan democracy is at a crossroads. As a longtime friend of Venezuela, the United States is both hopeful and concerned.

-- We are hopeful because the referendum, a constitutionally sanctioned mechanism, offers a peaceful, democratic and electoral solution and because the Venezuelan people have demonstrated an extraordinary democratic vocation and evolution over the past year.

-- We are concerned because the referendum will take place in an environment of intimidation, political polarization

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and growing authoritarian tendencies fostered by the GoV.

--Threats by the GoV against civic and electoral organizations and other elements of civil society, steps to subordinate other branches of government to executive authority, recent partisan behavior by Venezuelan security forces, and polarizing rhetoric run against the tide of democracy.

--The United States, working with the Organization of American States (OAS) and the international community, supports a constitutional, democratic, peaceful and electoral solution to the political impasse in Venezuela, in accordance with OAS Resolution 833.

--The future of Venezuela is in the Venezuelan people's hands. Venezuelan citizens must be able to exercise their constitutional rights in a fair and transparent referendum that is free from intimidation and respects the political will of the people.

--The U.S. and the international community will respect the results of a fair and credible referendum. The presence of international observers is key to the credibility of the process. The United States continues to firmly support the role of the Organization of American States and the Carter Center as observers.

--Venezuela is a key hemispheric neighbor. In the spirit of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the United States will continue to work with the OAS and the international community to support the legitimate right of the Venezuelan people to strengthen their democracy.  
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